

Vote NO - HB 5263 !

Email to Cetestimony@cga.ct.gov

FAO Commerce Committee,

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on HB 5263.

Having studied the health, disease, and environmental implications of rabbit farming, I must strongly oppose any proposed or existing rabbit farms. Rabbit farming in the UK has proved to have detrimental effects on natural environments. Causing waterways, drainage and soil to be contaminated with ammonia and acidic toxicity. This has an effect on all surrounding biology and wildlife, including newts, fish and micro organisms. Waste from animal farming, unfortunately does impact on surrounding areas. Also, rabbits are very susceptible to disease and illness. Farming practices have seen rabbits suffer, as it would be too expensive for rabbits to receive veterinary care. Research on farms has proved that welfare isn't a priority. Rabbits are also susceptible to Myxomatosis, Calicivirus, and other parasitic diseases; of which can have a "knock on" effect on surrounding wildlife.

Trauma and unnatural caging can cause such illnesses and diseases. I doubt all rabbits are tested for all these diseases at slaughter.

What is the impact of diseased meat going into the food chain, whether for animals or humans? Again, I urge you to consider this.

And, as in the UK, laws and welfare guidelines for breeding, rearing and slaughter is quite ungoverned, giving rise to cases of abuse. Cases of cruelty and welfare concerns, which in turn give rise to poor hygiene and disease. Rabbit farming is not widespread in the UK due to these common problems. The UK is also opposed to enterprises whereby the natural environment will become adversely affected and damaged. We live in an age where we should be steering away from animals easily affected by disease. Our focus should be one whereby food is not a risk to health, by eating it or by rearing it. We have a moral obligation to the countryside, animals and human life.

Rabbits are complex individuals who deserve so much more than to be used in this way. They are naturally fearful animals who do not cope well in a farming environment, and they will experience extreme stress at slaughter.

Rabbits are, shockingly, exempt from the Humane Slaughter Act 85-765. Among other things, this means rabbits may be fully conscious while being slaughtered. They do not need to be stunned before slaughter and an inspector is not required to be present, leaving them vulnerable to the worst kind of abuse with no requirement for documentation or supervision.

Rabbit farms will be a breeding ground for disease, with so many animals packed into one space. The highly contagious Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease will thrive in such conditions, and this could lead to the decimation of wild and domestic rabbits in the area.

There is very little demand for rabbit meat, most people are repulsed at the thought of consuming the third most popular household pet. People are in fact choosing to avoid animal products altogether in record numbers. Whole Foods and other specialty stores have long stopped selling rabbit meat after concluding there was no market for sales.

There is simply no need for such a backwards step to allow intensive rabbit farming and slaughter in this day and age.

Yours Sincerely

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